

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 194928

EXDIS, MILITARY ADDRESSEE HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOL RPT AMEMBASSY AMMAN 4079 ACTION SECSTATE O 041432Z AUG 76
QUOTE

S E C R E T AMMAN 4079

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PFOR MASS JO US
SUBJECT: TALK WITH KING HUSSEIN--JORDAN BUDGET AND MILITARY
DEVELOPMENT

1. WHEN I SAW KING HUSSEIN AUGUST FOUR I GAVE HIM A BRIEF
REPORT ON OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH HIS CIVILIAN AND MILITARY
PERSONNEL ON JORDANS CURENT BUDGET PROBLEMS I TOLD
THE KING THAT ON THE CIVILIAN SIDE WE THOUGHT IT
NECESSARY TO DO MORE TIGHTENING UP THEREFORE WE WOULD FURTHER
NEED DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE JORDANIAN BUDGET IN ORDER TO AVOID
FUTURE PROBLEMS.

2. I TOLD HIM WE WOULD BE MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS
TO WASHINGTON SHORTLY ON THE DIVISION OF FUNDS

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BETWEEN BUDGET SUPPORT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

FOR THE ITERIM QUARTER. WE WERE CONVINCED THAT JORDAN HAD A REAL BUDGET PROBLEM AND WOULD BE MAKING RECOMMENDATION ACCORDINGLY PROPOSING A SPLIT IN FAVOR OF BUDGET SUPPORT SOMEWHAT IN EXCESSOF \$40-20 DIVISION OF THE \$60 M NOW AVAILABLE.

3. ON THE MILITARY SIDE I TOLD THE KING THAT OUR FIRST PRIORTY WOULD BE TO ARRANGE FOR PAYMENT OF DEBTS ALREADY DUE THE US FOR FOREIGN MILITARY SALES. IF NOT PAID THESE COULD RAISE VERY SERIOUS ISSUES FOR JORDAN IN THE US. THIS MIGHT MEAN RESTRUCTURING HIS FY76 PROGRAM INCLUDING THE NEED TO POSTPONE THE PURCHASE OF SOME MILITARY EQUIPMENT SUCH AS HOWITZERS UNTIL NEXT YEAR.

4. THE KING SAID HE RECOGNIZED HE NOW HAD SERIOUS FUNDING PROBLEMS AND THAT TOUGH DECISIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE. I TOLD THE KING THAT WE WOULD GIVE HIM SHORTLY A LETTER ON THE MILITARY SIDE WHICH WOULD EXPLAIN INDETAIL AND IN AN UNVARNISHED METHOD SOME OF THE MORE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES. THIS LETTER WOULD BE FOR HIS OWN PERSONAL CONSIDERATION BUT IF HE WISHES TO SHOW IT TO HIS FRIENDS IN THE GULF TO SHOW THE IMPACT OF HIS FUNDING SHORTAGES ON HIS MILITARY CAPABILITIES THAT WOLD BE ALL RIGHT WITH ME. THE KING SAID HE WOULD WELCOME THE LETTER AND WOULD BE SENDING IT TO TEHRAN SO THAT SHAW WOULD KNOW THE FULL EXTENT OF HIS CURRENT PROBLEMS.

5. THE KING THEN RAISED WITH ME THE NEED FOR JORDAN TO RETHINK ITS MILITARY MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS AND HIS OWN JUDGEMENT THAT THIS WOULD REQUIRE SHIFTING HIS MILITARY TO A SMALLER MANPOWER BASE FOR A STANDING ARMY AND DEVELOPING A STRONG RESERVE CAPABILITY. HE SAID THE ISRAELI SYSTEM MIGHT WORK WELL IN JORDAN AND WITH THE NEED FOR MORE MANPOWER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE JORDAN VALLEY, HE COULD CREATE SETTLEMENTS THERE ALONG THE SAME LINES THE ISRAELIS HAD FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEVELOPMENT AND DEFENSE.

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6. I ALSO TOLD THE KING THAT HE HAD SERIOUS FINANCIAL PROBLEMS AND THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO BEGIN TO LOOK AT THESE INTERMS OF A FIVE YEARPLAN FOR HIS OWN MILITARY FROM THE POINT OFVIEW OF MANPOWER MAINTENANCE COSTS AND WEAPONS ACQUISITION. HE ASKED IF US EXPERTS MIGHT BE AVAILABLE TO HELP. I TOLD HIM WE WOULD DO ALL POSSIBLE TO ASSIST HIM ALONG THESE LINES.

7. FINALLY THE KING TALKED TO ME ABOUT THE OFFER OF THE SHAH TO DIESELIZE SOME OF HIS CURRENT TANK FLEET. HE SAID HE HOPED THAT THE SHAH COULD BE PERSUADED ALSO TO UP-GUN THE TANKS AT THE SAME TIME. HE SAW NO VALUE IN SENDING HIS TANKS TO IRAN PULLING THEM APART TO PUT IN NEW ENGINES AND RETURNING THEM HERE ONLY TO PULL THEM APART AGAIN TO PUT IN NEW GUNS. I SAID I AGREED WITH HIS JUDGEMENT ON THIS POINT AND SUGGESTED THAT WE WORK CLOSELY WITH HIM IN SEEKING SOME SOLUTION. KING SAYS FOR THE LONG TERM HE IS STILL VERY MUCH INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING AN ARMORED REBUILD FACILITY FOR JORDAN.

8. COMMENT: SINCE COMMANDER IN CHIEF GENERAL BIN SHAKER WAS WITH THE KING PRIOR TO MY CONVERSATION AND MY DEFENSE ATTACHE HAS DONE VERY CONSIDERABLE WORK IN BRINGING BIN SHAKER TO THE VIEW THAT KING NEEDS TO CUT DOWN ON HIS MILITARY MANPOWER AND BEEF UP HIS GENERAL PLANNING THE PRESENTATION OF "HIS IDEA" IS A SIGNIFICANT BREAK THROUGH HOPEFULLY TO INTRODUCE A GREATER REALITY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN JORDAN'S MILITARY PLANNING AND I AM PREPARED HERE TO FOLLOW UP I TRUST AND HOPE WE CAN ACHIEVE FULL STATE AND DOD SUPPORT OF THIS PROCESS. KING KNOWS HE IS IN OVER HIS HEAD IN TERMS OF FUNDING AND MANPOWER AND THIS IS THE BEST TIME TO GET HIM ON BOARD WITH A MORE REALISTIC APPROACH. WE WILL HAVE FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS AS THE PROCESS EVOLVES.

9. SUGGEST DEPARTMENT PASS DOD AND TEHRAN PICKERING

UNQUOTE HABIB

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